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PelhamNEWS

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Chill on the Hill



LAURA BARTON/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Kids got to try out their firefighting skills at Pelham's Summerfest on Saturday. With the help of actual firefighters, they hosed down a "building" and got a taste of saving the day. See story on Page 3.



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UPFRONT

Donation helping garden grow



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Pelham Cares received a cheque in the amount of \$1,000 from RBC Dominion Securities to help maintain and continue to grow its "Ever Bearing Ever Caring Garden." Pelham Cares coordinator, Lori Grande (not pictured) says the garden is a great addition to the Pelham Cares food bank since it gives the option of providing fresh food to clients. The garden was made possible by a number of organizations, including Forthill's Rotary Club, which provided materials, and young people from the Youth Resource Centre who built the garden. The garden is maintained by Pelham Cares and is a learning process, says Grande. They are welcoming volunteers to come help tend to the garden. Pictured are Paul Allen, president of Forthill Rotary, Mel Groom, Forthill Rotarian and wealth advisor with RBC Dominion Security, Colleen McCarthy and Jane Gilmour of Pelham Cares, and Mike Young of the Youth Resource Centre.

Olympians paddle in Welland

LAURA BARTON
Postmedia Network

Kathleen (KC) Fraser and Genevieve Orton will be competing for Canada in the two- and four-women's kayak at the Summer Games in Rio next month.

Last Saturday they were at the International Flatwater Centre for the Balmy Beach Regatta.

Fraser, from Oakville, and Orton, from Halifax, both said it's still a little weird to think of themselves as Olympians.

"I'm still kind of in a surreal state," said Fraser. "I won't believe it until I get to Rio."

Orton, who is with the Oredna Canoe Club in Lake Echo, N.S., said it's been different being on the receiving end of the awe and reverence

that people feel for Olympic athletes.

Orton said she's normally the one freaking out when she spots someone who has competed at that level.

"They took a picture of me and all of Oredna's old Olympians and I'm like 'Oh, my god, this is the best moment of my life,'" she said. "I'm in this now. I'm in this club. It's very weird."

Orton has always had her eye on the Olympic prize, though. When she was starting out in gymnastics as a three-year-old, she hoped to make the Olympics that way.

As she got taller and taller, she started to realize being an Olympic gymnast wasn't going to happen for her. She

started kayaking after that.

Fraser said she's been dreaming of it, too, and seeing other kayakers achieve success is what has kept her going.

"I think that's pretty much what kept me in the sport, seeing national team athletes paddle at clubs," she said. "When you actually see the athletes, it motivates you more because you're like 'Well, this person exists. They come to my club'."

Athlete visibility is a big thing for Fraser and now she's excited to have kids looking at her that way.

Fraser and Orton trained long and hard for this success and say they are lucky to have significant others who are also

involved in the sport. Because of that, they understand the amount of time it takes to train and compete in these competitions.

For both women, though, their kayaking careers are coming to a close.

"We're both due to retire at the end of the year," Orton, 32, said. "So this was a really nice way for us both to cap off our careers as paddlers."

Fraser, 30, said talking about retiring or thinking of a race being the last is a faux pas in the kayaking community, but is something that helped them get to where they are. Orton said they wanted to finish each race feeling good about it in case it was their last one.



LAURA BARTON/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Kathleen (KC) Fraser, left, and Genevieve Orton are both competing in Rio for the Summer Olympic Games. They were in Welland on Saturday for the Balmy Beach Regatta. Orton's daughter, Annika Pike, was there to support her.

"I think that really helped with going through the momentum of all the qualification stages," she said.

"You know, if it's our last year I just wanted to finish on a good note like when I started paddling," said Fraser.

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LOCAL NEWS

Thousands 'Chill on the Hill'

LAURA BARTON
Postmedia Network

Thousands of people packed into downtown Fonthill to "Chill on the Hill" and check out the numerous vendors and activities during Pelham's Summerfest last Saturday.

Vickie van Ravenswaay, director of recreation, culture and wellness with the town and a staff member for the event, said in the morning alone, more than 3,500 people walked through the gates to join in the celebration.

Pelham Mayor, Dave Augustyn agreed.

"We're just so delighted with the weather, and really when the weather's like this, people show up and that makes the festival a huge success."

The sun was shining bright and there was barely a cloud in the sky as people bought merchandise from vendors, tried out an assortment of food, listened to the live band and took part in the activities.

Children got their faces painted, met the hosts of television station TTV, played games and even had the opportunity to

learn about different animals with Safari Niagara and Reptile Kingdom on site.

Augustyn said the event showcases Pelham as a community and lets people know what the town's residents are all about.

"The whole festival is really a celebration of community and the community spirit," he said. "The small-town feel that we have here in Pelham, and people recognize that."

The four-day outdoor Chill on the Hill festival drew 30,174 including 16,067 to its feature last Saturday.

The previous festival record was 28,010.

"The total does not include everyone from today," said committee chair John Wink after Sunday's classic car show, the festival's newest event.

Although rain was predicted for Chill on the Hill, it held off each day.

Crowds filled the hill for last Friday's Fonthill bandshell concert, Farmers market and summer market. Last Friday, Country Night of bands and line dancing packed Pelham Street while a teen movie

night playing Star Wars filled Pelham Peace Park.

Saturday's 10 a.m. to-midnight street festival drew more than 16,000 to the day-long party of food, drink, vendors, rock entertainment and children's events.

During past festivals, high winds, heavy rain and excessive heat took a toll.

This year, the Sunday program extended beyond pancake breakfast, family walk, kids centre and

blues music.

A classic car show, which registered 139 cars including Corvettes, took Summerfest to 4 p.m.

Car show organizer Bill Gibson said the drivers appreciated the shady setting of Pelham Town Square.

"Most came from Welland, Niagara Falls and Pelham, they don't like to drive too far," he said. "But we had four from the States."

Augustyn said the festival

wouldn't be possible without the countless volunteers helping making sure things go smoothly.

"The work that the volunteers and staff have done over the last number of months, you know, really comes to fruition when the people come. So it's awesome."

— with Wayne Campbell,
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LAURA BARTON/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Two women at Pelham's Summerfest on Saturday really got into the live band's music and got up to dance as they played a song from the musical Grease.

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DAVE AUGUSTYN

On behalf of Council and the community, thank you to the 2016 Summerfest Committee, town staff, service club and other volunteers for your hard-work and dedication and to the many generous sponsors who made this year's four-day Summerfest the most successful yet.

First, I greatly appreciate the work of the Summerfest Committee, including John Wink, chair; coun. Gary Accursi; Bill Gibson, active transportation committee representative; Candy Ashby, Pelham Business Association representative; Matthew Leask and Michelle Stewart, Pelham residents; and Sofia Labriciosa, Mayor's Youth Advisory Council representative. The committee met for months prior to Summerfest to plan and finalize every detail and they worked very, very hard all weekend long to ensure a successful festival. Thank you very much.

Second, thanks so much to town staff. Thanks to Vickie van Ravenswaay, Sally Jaeger, Jodi Hendriks and other staff

who helped organized the overall event and worked with the committee to ensure success. I also appreciate the many town staff who volunteered in one capacity or another – from setting up, to serving beverages, to cleaning up – throughout the four days; thanks for giving your time to our community. And, thanks to the (mainly) public works staff who worked during the festival on logistics, garbage and recycling duty, and ensured the safety of participants and all the major clean-up.

Third, thanks to the very many members of the town's service clubs, including the Fonthill & District Kinsmen and Kinettes Clubs, the Fonthill Lions Club, and the Fonthill Rotary Club for helping serve beverages and greeting patrons. We couldn't have done it without you.

Fourth, thanks to the other members of the community who also volunteered. Thanks to members of the Pelham Fire Service, the Active Transportation Committee, the Pelham Sen-



Thousands of people visited Pelham on Saturday for the annual Pelham Summerfest.

LAURA BAXTON/WEILLAND TRIBUNE

iors Advisory Committee, St. John's Ambulance, the Mayor's Youth Advisory Council, members of town council, and the many, many other community volunteers.

Fifth, thank you to the many sponsors and friends

of Pelham Summerfest including our gold sponsors: Ball Construction, Fonthill Bandshell, Fonthill Dental, Hako Mobile, Lafarge Canada, McAvoy Belan & Campbell, Meridian Credit Union, RBC Royal Bank, and Square

Roots Restoration. And, thanks to our amazing media partners including Cogeco TV, Country 103, Erie Media, Giant FM, MyPelham.com, Niagara This Week, Pelham News, the Standard, the Tribune, and the Voice.

Finally, thanks to you and the more than 30,000 other people who enjoyed Pelham Summerfest over the festival's four days. Your attendance and community spirit made it a huge success.

All of this work and participation, including the visit by tourism minister Eleanor McMahon, the amazing performances by Jilly Black and the many other performers, the participation of Carlos and Suki from YTV, and the addition of a Sunday Car Show helped make the 2016 Pelham Summerfest the best ever.

On behalf of council, I appreciate the vision, dedication, and tremendous work by so many volunteers and staff to celebrate our vibrant, creative, and caring community. Thank you and congratulations on a resounding and overwhelming success.

You may contact Mayor Dave at mayordave@pelham.ca or read past columns at www.pelhammayordave.blogspot.com.

New mode of relating to each other needed



GRANT
LAFFEE

Have you ever asked yourself why the Black Lives Matter movement exists?

The movement is part of the Canadian discussion following the BLM protests at the Toronto Pride parade and a member of The Tenors declaring "all lives matter" in his rewrite of the Canadian national anthem during the Major League Baseball all star game.

I'm not asking this question

in the context of recent history in which you can say it exists as a response to tensions between African-Americans and police departments.

Rather, why did the circumstances that lead to the rise of BLM happen at all?

If BLM is too American for your tastes, then ask yourself why in our Canadian context, the Idle No More movement rose out of First Nations communities?

Think about it. It's not as if the issues faced by our aboriginal brothers and sisters suddenly fell upon us in 2012 when INM came together. We've known about the poverty, the lack of opportunity, the justice and treaty issues since I was a boy. Consider

that more than two decades after the Davis Inlet incidents put these issues before the eyes of the nation, the situation has barely improved. Only the names have changed. Instead of David Inlet, we're talking about Attawapiskat.

What is it about our political and economic structures that apparently prevent us from crossing the Rubicon on these issues?

I ask these questions – questions for which there are no easy answers – following a lecture at Brock University in St. Catharines by University of Toronto professor Rinaldo Walcott, who has looked closely at issues of race, politics and freedom.

His Wednesday afternoon

lecture last week was titled "Freedom thwarted: Post-Obama and the struggle for the demos," and asked the singular question: Did the presidency of Barack Obama change issues of race in the United States?

Obama was the first African-American president, and our conventional wisdom told us that whenever a member of a marginalized group reaches positions of high power or influence we have reached a critical milestone. That group is no longer marginalized.

While Walcott does not deny the historical importance of Obama's presidency nor the importance of representation in the halls of power, his answer to the question

amounts to "Not very much."

This is because, he said, when a member of these groups – be they black people, gay people, women, or First Nations – reach social, economic or political influence, they become part of that system.

Walcott, who looks at issues of race and politics on a global and historical context, said he is a critic of the Obama administration and points out that it hasn't really changed American foreign policy.

"So under Obama, American drones are killing blacks in the Sudan," he said. "What can you say when the face of an empire is a black man?"

A fundamental part of the problem, Walcott said, is that

American political and economic systems built a society that created the current racial and law enforcement tensions.

"What is needed is a new mode of relating to the world as each other," Walcott said.

If we cannot think of a new way to organize our politics, that isn't because another way doesn't exist. It is, rather, a failure of our imagination, he said.

The problem, Walcott said, is that when we try to address the issues of our day, we are deliberately constraining ourselves to think within the systems we already live in.

Continued on Page 6

COMMENT

Revelling in a hot housing market leads to Fonthill



MICHELLE ALLENBERG

With the booming Niagara real estate market, Revel Real Estate Brokerage has opened a location in Pelham.

Revel was established in 2013 by owner Ryan Serravalle. Its first office opened in Niagara Falls in 2014. With about 40 people working for Revel throughout Niagara there was a need to open a second office, which is located in Fonthill. The office is open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday to Friday.

The decision to open a Revel location in Fonthill was due to the ongoing business the company's realtors are doing in the area. Revel works closely with Niagara home developer Markon Homes. They have worked together on various development sites throughout Niagara, including Fonthill.

Serravalle said one of the upcoming developments Revel is working on is River Estates, which is being constructed on Highway 20 near Rice Road. Revel is also doing business at Lookout Point.

"We have big development, like River Estates — we have over 20 lots coming up there. We have Lookout Point and we are working on other developments in the area," Serravalle said.

He said what sets his company apart from others is Revel is team oriented and focused on creativity.

"We have a mentoring program in our office that trains people who are new to the business. We have a lot of different aspects in the company that really sort of takes new realtors and grows them into the industry, whether it is resale or new development," Serravalle said.

His brother, Dean Serravalle, who works as a sales representative and professional writer at Revel, said the company isn't like any other brokerage company they have come across. He said Revel has a dynamic team focused on growth.

"You're growing alongside people

who are experienced, but who are treating you like colleagues right from the very beginning," Dean said.

For Ryan Serravalle, what makes the company unique is realtors become their own brand when they work for Revel. He said the company works to create and build the personal brand of each employee, unlike other realty companies where realtors become the brand they

work for.

"They really get to express their individuality. I mean, we have a professional writer on staff, we have a professional photographer on staff, we have other creative things we are launching this year," he said.

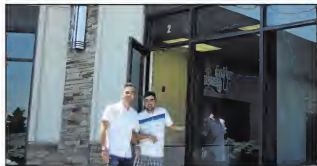
Since he started working in the realty industry in 2007 he has noticed a boom in real estate. He said it's the best he has ever seen it and it's about time people

discovered Niagara.

"It has a lot to offer in all these various communities, which is great. It's busy, it's hectic and it's good."

Ryan and Dean said they hope the housing market will continue to do well in the coming years. There is a lot of development in the area and there isn't an end in sight anytime soon.

MAAllenberg@postmedia.com



MICHELLE ALLENBERG/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Sales representative Dean Serravalle, left, and owner of Revel Real Estate Brokerage Ryan Serravalle stand in front of the newly opened Revel office in Fonthill.

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No easy solution for systemic racism

From Page 4

By way of illustration, think again about *Idle No More*. The issues that plague our First Nations communities are the direct result of generations of systemic racism. The dots of history are easily connected. We can all see them.

Are the systems that made the problem even capable of concretely addressing it?

That sort of radical change is not easy and Walcott offers no simple answers. He said we have lived within the same kind of politics for so long, we don't really have ade-

quate language to describe a free society that may look entirely different from what we have now.

Fortunately, there is historical precedent that proves we can think way outside the box when we want to.

History nerds will have noticed a peculiar word in the title of Walcott's talk. Demos. It's a Greek word meaning "the people," and is the root of the word "democracy," a system of government invented by the ancient Athenians.

The fascinating thing about Athenian democracy is that it had no

antecedent. The Athenians invented rule by the demos almost out of the ether and nearly over night. It was a revolution that changed the world and while our government is rather different than the democracy of Athens, we are still the children of that great experiment.

That is the kind of imaginative thinking Walcott said we need. And given the number of problems we face that seem intractable, he has a point.

"None of us should be satisfied by the world as it is," Walcott said. And he's right.



JACK BOLAND/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Rinaldo Walcott, a University of Toronto professor and member of the Anti-Black Racism network, speaks at the Black Lives Matter press conference on July 7.

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LOCAL NEWS

Billyard captures A title

BILL POTREZ
Postmedia Network

Sandy Billyard is as competitive as they come.

"I don't like to lose at ping pong, I'm one of those," Billyard said with a laugh after carding a gross 75 to place first in the A flight at the Niagara District Ladies Golf Championship at Bridgewater Country Club in Fort Erie Monday.

Billyard, who golfs out of Hunters Pointe in Welland, edged out Chris Critelli of the St. Catharines Golf and Country Club by two strokes for the win.

"There's usually a core group of five girls who we know are going to be the really tough ones to beat and I played with all of those girls," Billyard said.

The 56-year-old Fortnall native had a rough start with a double bogey on her first hole before settling down.

"I hit it into the hazard and a penalty and after that I played good," she said.

"My putting has been horrendous, but today it was



MILE DUBATISTA/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Sandra Billyard on the tee at the Niagara District Ladies Championship held at Bridgewater Country Club in Fort Erie on Monday.

good. I was quite shocked. I was on the range and was hitting it terribly."

Billyard said once she got into a groove, she felt great.

"Wonderful," she said. "It seems a little bit easier then. Your confidence gets built after three holes and you think it's not too bad and you start feeling more comfortable."

Billyard, who has won the event "five to six" times, finished fifth earlier this year at the Ontario Champion of Champions and 14th at the Ontario Senior Champion-

ships.

Rounding out the top five in the A flight were Critelli (77), Betty Divok of Hunters Pointe (81), Carol Cort of Riverview (85) and Martha Cruikshank of Niagara-on-the-Lake (86). Cruikshank was also the low net finisher at 71.

Divok was also the top senior finisher.

Yolanda Henry of Niagara-on-the-Lake captured the B flight title with an 86.

Henry fired a 47 on both the front and back nine.

"It was just steady," Henry said. "I was playing better than I've ever played."

She singled out her chipping and putting as particularly strong.

Henry finished with a triple bogey on the last hole, but had built in enough of a cushion.

"It was a great round," she said. "I had no idea (how I was doing) but I knew I was playing well."

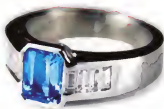
"I think I played well because the girls were so nice. We had a nice foursome and we were chatting. It wasn't so serious. It was a really good round."

Henry, a 60-year-old Windsor native, took up golfing about 10 years ago.

"We were surrounded by golf courses where we live, so we tried golf and I got into it more seriously," she said. Rounding out the top five in B flight were Patricia Garriot of NOTL (89), Anne Moss of Hunters Pointe (90), Lisa Allen of NOTL (91) and Sharon Schile of Bridgewater (94).

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Aboriginal jail population rising

ALISON LANGLEY
Postmedia Network

An Indigenous person's chance of being incarcerated is 10 times higher than the national average of non-Indigenous adults in Canada.

"That disparity continues to grow," said Shaune Gottfriedson, regional chief of the Assembly of First Nations in British Columbia.

Statistics indicate the Indigenous inmate population in Canadian prisons increased

by more than 50 per cent between March 2005 and March 2016 and aboriginal offenders are less likely to be released early on parole.

"The criminal justice system is rooted in colonialism and practices and policies aimed at indigenous people that amounts to a systematic discrimination," Gottfriedson said last Thursday.

Gottfriedson was one of several panelists who participated in a strategy session at

the annual general meeting of the Assembly of First Nations in Niagara Falls that focused on bridging the gaps in services within the justice system and supporting community safety plans and protocols.

Clive Welgill, chief of the Saskatoon Police Service and president of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, said a better allocation of funding dollars would go a long way to address the issue of over representation of Indigenous people in Canadian jails.

"We don't want more jails built, for those who are incarcerated, we are asking for better services," he said.

"In my humble opinion, we don't need to get tough on crime. We have to get tough on poverty, we have to get tough on racism, we have to

get tough on disadvantage." John Domm, president of the First Nations Chiefs of Police Association and chief of the Rama Police Service, agreed.

"A key part of our job is enforcing the law, but we can't just arrest away the problems," he explained.

He said "long-term planning, not short-term programs" are needed if First Nations police services are to be able to properly address challenges in their communities.

More than 1,000 people attended the three-day AFN's 37th annual general assembly held at Scotiabank Convention Centre.

National Chief Perry Bellegarde and RCMP Commissioner Bob Paulson signed an agreement last Tuesday to

develop policies to effectively address racism in the RCMP and to ensure public safety without discrimination.

The protocol also supports action to address the safety and security of Indigenous women and girls.

Although Indigenous women make up four per cent of Canada's female population, 16 per cent of all women murdered in Canada between

1980 and 2012 were indigenous.

A report by the RCMP in 2014 identified a total of 1,181 missing and murdered indigenous women and girls. The federal government is in the process of launching a national inquiry into the missing and murdered women.

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ALISON LANGLEY/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

John Domm, president of the First Nations Chiefs of Police Association, addresses the crowd at the Scotiabank Convention Centre in Niagara Falls Thursday.

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High temperatures heat up sales

MICHELLE ALLENBERG
Postmedia Network

Excessive heat alerts have become a common occurrence in the past few weeks, and while some are groaning about the weather, others are soaking it up.

Business for air conditioning and fan companies is heating up across Niagara.

John Adams, owner of Niagara Home Heating, said his company is usually busy during summer months, but this year has been especially busy. He said it's been difficult keeping up with demand,

but his employees are managing well. He said he has had to refer people to other companies at times due to the demand.

The best time of year to install an air-conditioning unit is May or September. Adams said this will ensure companies doing the installation are not being overburdened. He

recommended people check their systems regularly and take care of them. He said people should wash the outside of their unit and check the filter.

Business has increased by 100 per cent since last year. Niagara Home and Heating has been installing about three to four air conditioning units per day.

"The heat wave is 100 per cent to blame for how busy we've been," Adams said.

While some people are enjoying the cool indoors, others are finding all they need is a sweet treat to cool off.

Madison Plalce, manager of Avondale Dairy Bar, said compared to last year the rural St. Catharines ice cream parlour has been much busier.

"The hotter the day, the busier we are."

Plalce said she noticed the store is pretty busy in the evening.

"We've had to have longer shifts

“

The heat wave is 100 per cent to blame for how busy we've been."

John Adams,
owner of Niagara Home Heating

and a lot more shifts. And do a little more hiring to keep up with the demand," Plalce said.

With the increase in customers, Plalce said employees have had to keep a closer eye on inventory as not to run out.

"Usually we probably go through 20 to 30 tubs — we have 11.4-litre tubs. And we usually go through 20 to 25 tubs a night."

Continued on Page 19



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JULIE JOCKSAK/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Karter Ellis, 16, and his father Shawn Ellis look to escape the high heat by way of an outing to the Avondale Dairy Bar. It was a trip that also followed Karter's treatment at Juravinski Hospital in Hamilton for a brain tumour that he has been battling. Karter has another five weeks of treatment and hopes to make a full recovery.



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Float Fest coming to canal

LAURA BARTON
Postmedia Network

It started out as an idea shared on Facebook and has transformed into an event with more than 2,000 people saying they're interested in going.

Float Fest 2016 is an event all about relaxing the day away on an inflatable while drifting down the

Welland Recreational Canal.

The event was started by 25-year-old Wellander Phill Gladman, who originally shared a post on the social media website of a similar event in Helsinki, Finland.

"All I said is, with a caption, I was like we should have something like this happen in Welland," he said.

Continued on next page



LAURA BARTON/WEI LAND TRIBUNE

Phill Gladman is showing what his event is all about: lazing down the canal on an inflatable. He's hosting Welland's first ever Float Fest and is inviting everyone to come out for a relaxing drift down the canal.



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LOCAL NEWS

Details for late August event on Facebook

From previous page

From there, his post got a lot of encouragement and people really wanting to see it happen, so he started planning.

Starting at Welland's Scuba Park just off of Lincoln Street, people will take their inflatables, get in the water and float down to the dock area by the amphitheatre by Bridge 13.

It's a family-friendly event, Gladman said, so there's no alcohol allowed.

"There's always Drinky-McSnokey, but there's really no room for him here."

He said it's about having some good clean fun. He's planning on having his four-year-old daughter participate.

He's taken precautions to make sure it's a safe event by getting several YMCA lifeguards on board.

"There is really nobody with first aid experience who's going to be out there quicker than a lifeguard," he said.

For its inaugural year, whether there will be vendors or not is still up in the air. Gladman suspects at the very least food trucks that do go

by might stop in to see what's happening and start selling.

The only table he is hoping to have set up for sure is one to collect donations for The Hope Centre. He said his friend wants to collect donations for the food bank.

"I'd love to see a big pile of cans (and) boxed food stacked up," he said since The Hope Centre is something important to him, too.

Something he does have planned for the event is a "Laziest Floater" prize. He said there's no criteria for it and the winner will be chosen by applause. The plan is to have a large inflatable that could fit two or more people as the prize.

As for getting back to the starting point afterwards, he said walking down the canal pathway is a great option.

He also looked at how this event could impact the city, especially since there is such a huge online interest with people saying they'd be willing to drive two hours to make it.

"There's so many ways that the city could benefit from this silly idea."

Between people stopping at local food establishments or others who need to purchase items they may have forgotten, he sees a lot of potential

for some business.

He said the event itself is free and he's not looking for any compensation at all, even if he needs to put in some

extra money for insurance with the BIA.

"I just want to see this happen," he said.

The date of the event is set

for Aug. 28. All details can be found on Float Fest 2016's Facebook event page.

lbaron@postmedia.com

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Photo Courtesy: Emily Cooper

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LAURA BARTON/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Phill Gladman is hosting Welland's first-ever Float Fest and is inviting everyone to come out for a relaxing drift down the former canal.

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Weather heats up sales at pool installer

From Page 14

Plaice said last year the business would use about 15 to 20 tubs of ice cream per day. She said there are usually 44 different flavours available, so the dairy bar must stay aware of what's selling fast. She said that doesn't even

include the boxes of ice cream they sell, and there's no way of knowing how much they sell in a day.

Ice-cream parlours and air conditioning companies aren't the only ones struggling to keep up with the hot demands.

Tessier Pools in St. Catharines has seen a 20 per cent increase in pool installations compared to last year.

"Usually you go gang busters to the end of July and taper off in August, but I don't think we are going to see that this year," said owner Richard

Tessier.

He said the heat has made business boom, which is great, but it is harder for construction.

His employees have to start much earlier in the day to make sure they can get work done before it gets too hot. He said the days are much longer,

too, because staff need to take more breaks so they don't overwork themselves.

"Days start early, last longer, so you take full advantage of the work as it comes in because it is a seasonal business and you just have to adapt I suppose."

Tessier said his prediction is business will continue to boom until the end of fall. He said he's ecstatic about the work, but exhausted at the same time.

The high temperatures are expected to continue for the next two weeks.



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Public school board budget climbs by \$6 million

WAYNE CAMPBELL
Special to Postmedia Network

District School Board of Niagara will operate with a \$438.2-million budget for 2016-17.

That's an increase of \$6.07 million over 2015-16.

Most comes from a 1.25 per cent increase in teacher and support staff pay following central labour agreements negotiated earlier this year.

The province passes along grant money to the board to cover the increases.

With the new budget, accepted by trustees last Monday, DSBN will staff and operate 100 schools serving 24,302 elementary and 11,981 secondary students.

A total of 3,870 teachers, assistants, administrators and support staff will dip by 13.

Attrition is expected to take care of the difference avoiding layoffs, trustees were told.

Board chair Dale Robinson said the board's staff have done well maintaining a balanced budget over the years.

Unlike some boards "who have to go begging" to avoid falling into deficit, DSBN has kept its budgets even, she said.

The board may draw on its reserve to cover \$1 million of potential additional increases approved last Monday. They involve specific strategic goals set by the board.

For example, \$50,000 will go to a school-based mental health liaison teacher initiative. It trains a teacher in each school to co-ordinate a support system for the mental health of students.

Another \$50,000 would cover tuition for teachers taking additional qualification courses to strengthen the system's overall math program. About 550 elemen-

tary teachers have already taken courses.

Backing it up is \$100,000 for an interactive math computer program.

The board will set aside \$50,000 for what business services superintendent Stacy Veld called "curb appeal."

Schools throughout the system have landscaping and gardens programs that enhance schools in their role as neighbourhood hubs.

The money will allow hiring of high school students and post-secondary students to care for the gardens in the summer.

The board plans to hire an additional field technician, at \$43,000, for the St. John's Outdoor Education Centre, which is now undergoing renovations. The adventure guide will support school programs in the Short Hills area.

Meanwhile, two educational assistants at \$86,000 will work in a program to reduce suspension and expulsions by students with behavioural problems.

Similarly, 10 education assistants will be hired for \$430,000 to assist about 160 preschool children with medical and physical needs entering kindergarten programs.

The board will recruit two more social workers for \$100,000 to join six already in the system. They work with elementary students with serious mental health concerns that could lead to hospitalization.

This September Veld will become the board's treasurer.

Education director Warren Hoshizaki said last Monday he will pass on the "treasurer" portion of his "secretary treasurer" title.

Veld and a chief financial officer Rick Wenzak prepared the board's budget.



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Niagara getting ready to be set for GO

MARYANNE FIRTH
Postmedia Network

Local work remains on track to support GO Transit's arrival to Niagara.

Following a provincial announcement last month that daily commuter rail service will reach the area by 2021, regional staff remain focused on plans for station construction and surrounding development.

Niagara Region's planning and development committee received an update last Wednesday on the GO hub and transit stations study, which has

been underway since January.

The province has committed to bringing GO to Grimsby by 2021, expanding through to St. Catharines and Niagara Falls by 2023. The rail expansion project will include construction of a new station at Casa-lanca Boulevard in Grimsby, as well as upgrades to existing train stations in St. Catharines and Niagara Falls.

Those retrofits will begin as soon as next summer.

The Region's study, costing \$712,000 and set to be finished in 15 months, will result in creation of preferred concepts

for the three proposed GO stations, as well as an additional station at Ontario Street in Beamsville.

It will also include secondary plans for lands in and around the stations, a transportation analysis and market analysis to determine potential area development.

The first of six phases has been completed, with context and review of the study finished in June, said Diana Morreale, the Region's manager of community planning.

The second phase will include work on the visions for the transit hub and

stations, will review best practices and look at future demand and capacity.

It will also include details such as connectivity needs, parking needs and costing of related capital projects, in addition to an implementation plan.

Public consultation meetings were held in the four municipalities with stations at the end of June, but only a handful of people attended each.

Future engagement sessions will take place when the draft secondary plans are available in late fall, Morreale said, adding the project team is aware the turnout was not ideal.

In Grimsby, residents recommended the station's height should preserve views of the waterfront and escarpment. Concerns were also raised that part of the structure will be within the green belt, which may threaten the woodlot and natural corridors nearby, planner Denise Landry said. "The group suggested that buffers be used around the station to protect the features."

Suggestions were made in the other communities about restricting the height of the stations, ensuring transit connectivity and improving the street-scapes in surrounding areas.

West Lincoln Mayor Doug Joyner called it "vital" that focus be placed on

how people get to and from the stations. In addition to the creation of an inter-municipal transit system, that should also include a closer look at road infrastructure en route and additional parking opportunities in other areas with husing to the station, he said.

"I think we need to be cognizant we're going to really create some traffic jams in the local area around there."

Staff are reaching out to the Metroline to determine how to move the process forward and to discuss who will be responsible for completing different project components, acting chief administrative officer Mo Lewis said.

If the Region completes some of the work Metroline had initially expected to take on, there may be some leveraging opportunities to bring the service to Niagara sooner, he added.

With the province leaving the door open for improvements within the timeline, Regional Chairman Alan Cassin called it important that the Region continue its advocacy, taking down any potential barriers and doing what it can to "help the project move forward faster if at all possible."

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